November / December 2002

PRINCETON TORY



THE PRINCETON TORY

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Volume XIX - Number 6

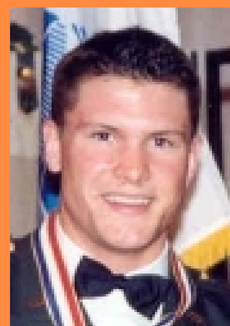
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Notes from the Publisher

I've learned a great deal over my twelve months as *Tory* publisher. I've been asked to defend my views, renege numerous opin-



ions, and have been personally confronted, both in person and in print. But after all that, I've come to one conclusion: the conservative worldview holds water. Conservatives are more than reactionaries and more than "defenders of the old guard." In fact, conservatism is America's most constructive and comprehensive vision for the 21st century.

When I took this job I did not expect any mass conversions to the conservative camp here at Princeton. However, as stated in my first *Notes*, I hoped only to "legitimate conservatism as a philosophy" and "facilitate a campus discussion." I truly believe we've done both.

As far as a philosophy, conservatives are often accused of being narrow-minded and "intolerant" of various groups (i.e. gays, feminists, and atheists). Far from intolerant, conservatives instead support a society in which marriage, family values, and religious faith are encouraged by the public and private sectors. While attempting to discredit the constant stream of liberal ideology spewing from the University administration and staff, the *Tory* also provides tangible solutions for societal ills. By advocating government support of the traditional family unit, a return of the acceptability of the "homemaker" vocation, freedom from oppressive government oversight, moral responsibility, and the revival of religious faith, conservatives provide a working blueprint for a free and prosperous future.

It's also evident that for the past year we have been central to the campus discussion. Our pages have sparked a tremendous amount of discussion on campus and contributed more than any "dialogue" or "race forum" to the diversity of the Princeton intellectual experience. In fact, according to a USG survey, we are now the most read political publication on campus. I attribute this to a committed staff, diligent editors, and a first-class Editor-in-Chief. Thank you to everyone involved.

I'd like to conclude with the last words from President Ronald Reagan's farewell speech. "We've done our part…We weren't just marking time. We made a difference. We made the city stronger, we made the city freer, and we left her in good hands. All in all, not bad, not bad at all."

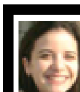
**** Special thanks to my great friend Jim Knutson for designing the cover****

Pete Hegseth '03
phegseth@princeton.edu

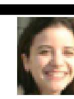
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THE
PRINCETON TORY
November / December 2002 www.princetontory.com





Nina by the Numbers



14
Days since she told members of the USG Executive Committee, in regards to the Tory, "they should not be able to publish that."

3
E-mails sent to Tory editors within 16 minutes of being notified that her letter would be published.

6
E-mails sent in 24-hour span to friends of the Tory demanding that her letter not be published.

24
Total number of students reached by her e-mails.

0
Students persuaded.

USG President Condemns, Threatens *Tory*

From: nlangsam@princeton.edu
To: tory@princeton.edu
Subject: Offended

Dear Pete and Brad,

I just read the Tory, and I have to say that I was very offended by the sentence on page 5, which stated, "...but it won't change the reality that the homosexual lifestyle is abnormal and immoral." I have a lot of thoughts about this comment and about the *Tory* in general. Although I am a registered Republican, I am also a Jew from the northeast. I say this, because I consider myself a Conservative in NY, but not so much at Princeton. Reading lines like this in the *Tory* makes me embarrassed to be associated with the Conservative wing on this campus. As a practicing Jew, I am well aware of the Bible's condemnation of homosexuality. But as a member of the Princeton community, and as the elected representative of the students, I feel obligated to defend my constituents and friends. I have many homosexual friends, and I worry that statements like this make them feel even more alienated at a school like Princeton. In your ideal world, maybe gays would not exist. But this is America in the 21st century, and gays do exist—they're in your classes, they're your professors, and they're even your friends. So, I hope that the *Tory* will not cross this line in the future. I have no problem with your criticizing the LGBT in terms of political agenda issues, but you should not be attacking individual students on this campus.

Sincerely,
Nina

"Please speak to them about this ASAP if you care about The Tory."

-Nina Langsam, Undergraduate Student Government President, in an e-mail to Tory staff, asking that they stop publication of her letter to The Tory e-mail account.

"They should not be able to publish that."

-Langsam on The Tory in front of the USG Executive Committee

"I hope you will not cross this line in the future."

-Langsam in an e-mail to The Tory.

Pete Hegseth and Brad Simmons respond:

Thanks for welcoming us into the 21st century. We're glad to be here.

First, the particulars. You cite your registration as a Republican (a New York conservative at that) as if it uniquely entitles you to disagree with conservatives on campus whereas, in fact, it is wholly irrelevant. You refer to your status as a practicing Jew whereas, in fact, you seem to reject the letter and spirit of the Old Testament. Finally, you make repeated allusions to the importance of your membership in this community, at this time period, with your current friends – as if those have any bearing on the moral issues in question. Had you been "the elected representative of the students" two hundred years ago, would you be equally "obligated to defend your constituents and friends" by accepting the prevailing campus orthodoxy?

However, we're not publishing your letter because it's a shining example of clarity and force of thought. Your attack on the "Rant" and "the Tory *in general" is a notable departure from the approach of previous USG presidents, all of whom understood the importance of encouraging dissenting political viewpoints on campus. It separates you from the vast majority of student government leaders at other college campuses, who are frequently bound by their own constitutions not to use their political offices to berate minority viewpoints.*

Overwhelming majorities of Americans agree with the notion that homosexuality and heterosexuality are not moral equivalents. Only at Princeton and other college campuses is this considered a "minority" perspective. The 1996 Defense of Marriage Act – signed into law by President Clinton and endorsed by 85 members of the United States Senate – defines marriage for federal purposes as being between one man and one woman. Similar examples of "heterosexism" have been enacted in 33 states.

The fact that a Democratic president, both houses of Congress, and well over 175 million Americans disagree with you does not make you wrong. It does, however, call into question your decision to single out the Tory, *a publication whose views have broad national support and reflect the opinions of many intimidated members of the University community. (For the record, we take issue with your claim that the writers of that particular Rant targeted "individual students" – this is clearly not the case, though it's interesting in the midst of an email singling us out for attacks.)*

In fact, what's notable about your letter is not your criticism of the "Rant" concerning homosexuality. Instead, what you've shown us and the rest of your "constituents" – otherwise known as "students" – is a willingness to pick on causes you find distasteful, damaging the reputation of your office in the process. We have it on good authority that, at a recent closed meeting of the USG Executive Committee, you made the Tory *an agenda item and floated the idea that "they shouldn't be able to publish that."*

As we have come to realize, your presence in this debate has very little to do with the ethics of homosexuality and everything to do with freedom of expression. All editors of campus publications, particularly those considered by some to be outside of the mainstream, should be advised of this danger. We are counting the days (see "Table of Contents") until you, in your capacity as USG President, publicly vow not to censor political expressions with which you disagree.

You owe it to your "constituents."

Andrews Misunderstands Reparations

Dear Editors,

Mr. Andrews's article is one of the first in Princeton's dialogue about "Reparations" to use real factual data, however he misuses this information to make blanket generalizations and assumptions. His first argument claims that reparations are not constitutional under Article 1, Section 9 of the Constitution. This issue is not so cut and dry, and cannot be thoroughly explained in a short article, but such hypothesis [sic] would be a great JP or Thesis topic…

Mr. Andrews also uses misleading statements about the goals of "Reparations advocates." Had he taken the time to read recent literature, he would have seen that there is NOT a consolidated Reparations effort. Supporters of this issue are in favor of everything [sic] from economic compensation of wages lost during slavery to present policy changes concerning racial profiling and public education. It would have helped if Mr. Andrews actually identified individuals or organizations instead of including everyone within the "reparations advocate" super-umbrella. More so, there is NO consensus on what "reparations" actually are. Some advocates include the Jim Crow era as well in their claims for restitution.

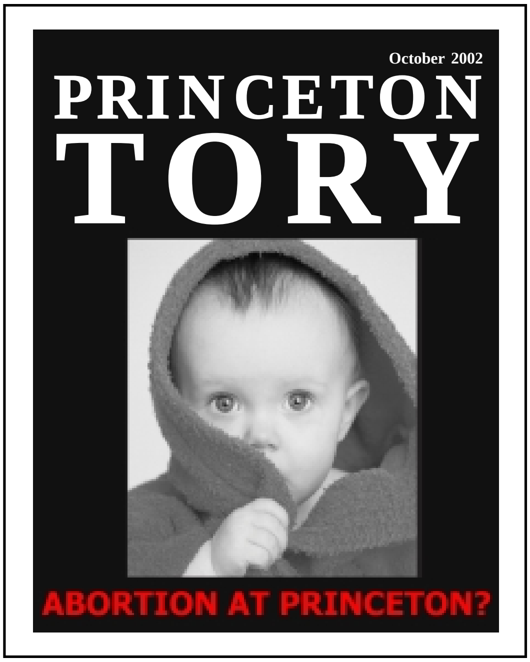
My final point is that I am disappointed in the current dialogue on this campus about Reparations. I agree with Mr. Andrews that most of the dialogue has been "accusations of racism and hypocrisy." The reason for this is the lack of unbiased information. The Reconciliation Committee of the Princeton Justice Project is encouraging students to continue this engaging dialogue, however, with academic intellectualism (INFORMATION! INFORMATION! INFORMATION!)…

In the brevity of this opinion, I was unable to touch on the false claims of "self-induced" damaged to the African American psyche, or the role of Africans in the slave trade. However, please be aware that Mr. Andrews did not provided us [sic] with the full picture to say the least.... Therefore, we need to have facts from the complete spectrum of advocates and opponents so we can sift through the fluff of future articles.

Stephanie Mash '04
Co-President, Princeton Justice Project

John Andrews responds:

Co-President Mash makes the excellent point that had the author researched his topic more thoroughly, he would have realized that there is, in fact, no reparations movement. The author readily concedes this point.



On Humanitarian Aid

Dear Editors,

In the last Rant, there was a heated criticism of the poster commenting on the "measure of success." As the designer and distributor of that poster, I found it odd that the Rant noted that money is "necessary element" in "finding something that works." Doesn't food distribution cost money? Recently, when the UN Food and Agriculture Organization requests $20.1 million in humanitarian aid to provide famine relief for the 14 million people at severe risk in southern Africa and Afghanistan, it wasn't because they were going to run out and plant a bunch of farms; rather, they're going to use it buy food from the existing supplies and distribute it. And yes, there are many governments that aren't distributing the food they have, but that doesn't mean that all are like that. It only means that we have to be careful about the distribution of our resources. So yes, money isn't the final answer, but it is necessary component of the answer. And when that component is missing, I believe we should do our best to provide it.

Sincerely,
Darren Geist '05

Ira Leeds responds:

Singling out money as a "necessary element in humanitarian relief" is like calling water a "necessary element" in our diets: both statements are obvious to all and helpful to none. Far more forces than money enter into a successful humanitarian aid program - my portion of the "Rant" focused on the most significant of these. I feel that the humanitarian mission to impoverished countries needs to shift focus. Instead of attempting to mitigate the symptoms of the disease, I can't understand why there is such little emphasis on removing the disease altogether. For instance, you mentioned more humanitarian aid is needed for Afghanistan. I assume this is the same Afghanistan where bandits and thieves run amok because no government will take a stand against the ineffective and corrupt warlords that run provinces outside of Kabul (see WSJ, Op-ed Section, Nov. 19, "Let's Not Forget Afghanistan"). In another case, Angola seems to be firing SAM missiles on U.N. humanitarian aid cargo planes. It seems to me that money is a non-issue when the corrupt governments of developing countries either don't want or don't care if their citizens are starving. Let's take care of the source of these problems and ridding the world of oppressive, non-representative regimes. Anything short of that is, at best, a short-term solution that will divert attention from the real task at hand.

THE RANT

- First, a brief tribute to schizophrenic *Prince* columnist, Aileen Nielsen '05. In a November 19th op-ed, she huffed: "After all, there's always the staff of the *Tory* (and their apparant [sic] right to own luxury vehicles without having to think about starving children in Africa)." One week later, amnesia set in. Her November 26th piece contained the following comments about the exact same issue discussing luxury vehicles: "I didn't read the *Tory*," "I don't actually read the *Tory*," and our favorite, "Please keep in mind that I am not writing about the *Tory* now as I know nothing about it." Just so we're clear, we've never read a single word Aileen has written.

- As we wrote this month's "Rant," a kid conveniently showed up and plopped himself next to us in the computer cluster, in a blatant (and pathetic) attempt at journalistic espionage. Listen buddy, your flag-burning computer background gave you away. And next time, when you put on headphones, try turning on some music.

- Is it just us, or has the Princeton University Dining Services' (PUDS) level of service been consistently mediocre? Maybe it comes from when the Powerade was out for four days straight or how the beef and chicken tend to look and taste the exactly same no matter what exotic dish the label says they are. One positive step might be performance reviews, which, not surprisingly, were strongly opposed last year by the Workers' Rights Organizing Committee (WROC). Evaluations provide for accountability and encourage efficiency for employees. Just look at the bargain-priced $1.55 bottles of Powerade and $0.80 bagels at Frist as evidence of the financial impacts of a dining system without employee accountability. Don't even get us started on nutrition or the late meal program.

- The world's first cloned human baby is due in January. For the child's sake, let's hope it fares better than Dolly. For humanity's sake, let's hope this practice stops.

- For those of you who think Princeton's left-leaning activist elements have died, fear not. They just moved to England. A recent *Prince* op-ed noted that old workers' rights luminaries Dave Tannenbaum '00 and Seth Green '01 have joined forces at Oxford University to campaign against American unilateralism in Iraq. It would appear, however, that their new organization is running into the same difficulties as their old one did at Princeton. For starters, they've always had a problem with names. After creating the Workers' Rights Organizing Committee, a label that might make Stalin blush, they conceived of Americans for Informed Democracy (AID) – and what better acronym for obsessive multilateralism than one resembling a disease that kills millions across the world? When Tannenbaum and Green need a cheesy acronym for future activism, may we recommend contacting the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgendered) groups? That would at least make the ongoing "War on the English Language" a multilateral one.

- Oh, the irony! In a gesture of goodwill, Saddam Hussein accepted the UN Security Council resolution calling for weapons inspections. Sadly, Hussein expressed his magnanimity by overruling the unanimous decision of the Iraqi parliament, which allegedly represents the voice of the people. People with any sense know that the whole event was a show to promote Hussein's image in the world, but it is simply too laughable that Hussein shows us what a good guy he is by exercising his power as a dictator.

- We can all learn a few lessons from grad student Elliot Ratzman's latest tome on Christianity in the *Nassau Weekly*: 1) the power of the quotation mark, something "people" like Ratzman are well-versed in; 2) how an anti-war activist can endorse "fighting (political evils) in an organized fashion" without bursting into laughter; and 3) the acceptability of saddling rich white folks with a longstanding philosophical dilemma – namely, how God and evil can co-exist – that also confronts millions of lower- and middle-class nonwhites. Oh, and one more: if you want to bash "white, affluent Christians," particularly ones whose children died in high school shootings, you'll always have a special place in the *Nass*.

- Remember Planned Parenthood? Of course, who could forget? They're the ones who, among other things, argue that minors have a right to abortion without parental consent. Well, these days Planned Parenthood is running a poster-design contest to mark the thirtieth anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, and—yup, you guessed it—children under the age of eighteen who wish to compete must obtain parental consent.

- Our Publisher, Pete Hegseth, was recently challenged to a duel by the president of College Democrats, Owen Conroy. The newly formed Princeton Dueling Society will host the paintball showdown, tentatively scheduled for some time after Christmas break. In the words of our President, "The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain."

- By the way, the *Nass* is next.

- Enjoying your "Fair Trade" Coffee at Café Vivian? We hope so, because in promoting this idea of "Fair Trade," you're increasing inequality and poverty in the world. Here's how markets actually work: Let's say that all over the world, coffee bean farmers make a level wage (because that's what markets do). People are willing to work at these wages because that is the most money they can make, given their skills. Now, say we start buying only from certain farms that comply with "Fair Trade" practices. Because wages are forced upward, fewer workers are employed (not a real tough concept). Good work, idiots! It took the United States a long time to establish what we think of today as "fair working practices." These impoverished nations need some time before they can reach our labor standards, not some ridiculous "Fair Trade" idea, which will only hamper this evolution. We'll continue to support poor coffee farmers everywhere (a flamingly liberal ideal) by purposely not buying "Fair Trade" Coffee.

- The November *Idealistic Nation*, the College Dems' monthly dose of collectivism, brought a smile to callous conservatives with its, "Frozen Testicles and the Debate over Campus Intellectualism." The University banned the Nude Olympics because the event promotes "student alcohol abuse, underage drinking, lack of concern for the welfare of fellow students, and risk of harm to themselves, to other people, and to property." Chris Rizzi '05 cites this description but then notes that it "could describe the Street any weekend, and yet the University surely has not even considered handing down one-year suspensions to every student who visits the Clubs." Let's hope Rizzi isn't a pre-med. Princeton's policy is about safety, yet is specific to the dangers of nude drinking. While both the Street and snowfall drinking has its risks, given alcohol's ability to trick consumers into feeling warm since their blood is closer to the skin, *nude* drinking increases the risk of hypothermia. Given alcohol's ability to impair judgement, the drunkard thinks like a sober College Democrat and ignores the risks to one's constitution. Ironically, Rizzi presents his own argument as means to "jumpstart intellectual debate on campus right away." To help him jumpstart his snow-frozen brain, may we recommend to him a Princeton tradition: not nudity, but scholarship.

- While our friends in the College Republicans have at times seemed more like donkeys in disguise, we now are confident in their renewed passion for the conservative cause on campus. We hope to see their club take a more active role and develop their membership. We are confident that they can prevail even in the face of a biased administration (see "Princetonians at the Polls").

- Much has been made about Hootie Johnson, the chairman of the Augusta National Golf Club, and his unwillingness to admit women as members to the prestigious Augusta National, home of The Masters. Although we applaud Hootie's steadfast defense of the rights of private enterprise, we're curious what the golfers think about it. Well, of the 30 players participating in the Tour Championship one month ago, the first 29 off the course said they would not boycott the upcoming Masters. The last, Vijay Singh, a Fijian of Indian descent who's had issue with Augusta National in the past, was asked the same question. The feminists eagerly awaited his answer, until with simple elegance he replied "Hell no." The feminists shuddered. We applaud.

- "When you're losing an argument, focus on irrelevant details." No description better characterizes the response by Louisa Alexander '03 to a recent *Tory* article commenting on a controversial talk, which advertisements claimed was about the "joys and toys of gay sex." The *Tory*'s Evan Baehr '05 argued that promotional fliers and statements about the event were inappropriate and misleading, a problem plaguing many such events. Alexander responded with a tart little piece in the *Nassau Weekly*, obsessing over the *Tory*'s imprecise labeling of gay/lesbian student groups. We'll let readers observe the complexity for themselves: go to the central web site for these groups (www.princeton.edu/~pride) to observe bureaucracy at its best. There's the LGBT, LGBA, LGBQ, LGBTQ, LGBT Student Services, P-QUE, PQGC…well, you get the idea. As military folks might say, this organization is FUBAR.

- African-American Studies 406, "Reading Toni Morrison," is being taught next semester. (Don't worry, friends of Toni, she's not straining her creative powers to actually teach the course.) Either way, we'll pass.

-Compiled by the* Tory *Editors

The Christian Right

Mixing Politics and Religion

Brad Simmons '03

According to a 2001 survey by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, 76.5% of Americans identify themselves as Christian. Recent election results suggest that, by a 6-point margin, voters preferred Republican candidates for Congress.

Christians and Republicans abound – in the nation, that is. But purveyors of conventional wisdom at Princeton have defied national trends and, as it happens, the laws of language, transforming "Christian Right" into a four-letter word.

As Jenn Carter explained in the October *Tory*, the University, despite its deeply rooted religious traditions and even a motto emphasizing scholarship "under God," generally frowns on religious activity. Or, more precisely, administrators might accept that religious expression is a permanent aspect of campus life, but almost explicitly insist that those expressions adapt to modern social trends else they risk illegitimacy. This is threatening to someone who has been brought up as a devout Christian, and I can understand why.

A religious student looks around campus and sees that the University has clearly taken sides on vital Christian (and many other faiths') issues. The very existence of a University-funded organization called "Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgendered Student Services," with its own hired voice in the administration and a wealth of institutional support and encouragement, suggests as much. Using the organization's funds – stemming partly from tuition payments – to place a full-page advertisement in the *Prince* heralding a lecture concerning the "joys and toys of gay sex," an event at which Dean of Undergraduate Students Kathleen Deignan spoke, illuminates the University's de facto stance on issues of concern to the student religious community.

The list of sucker punches continues. Residential advisors are encouraged to make condoms available to students at all times of the day, prompting some concerned RAs to engage in non-distributive protest. McCosh Health Center brochures warn pregnant students to stay away from manipulative "pro-life" pregnancy counseling centers. Passages read at University-run religious services, including the recent one on September 11, habitually alter gender pronouns and other portions of established hymns and biblical texts to ensure their political correctness. And the Office of Religious Life, a presumed safehaven for religious expression, has in practice managed to ignore the last two words of its official title, emphasizing instead the importance of "spirituality." It selectively provides financial support to student groups, even helping to sponsor one campus publication whose professed purpose is the spread of secularism.



Our boy, Johnny W.

Recall that these examples only relate to the role played by the administration in furthering hostility toward religion; left out are the abundance of disparaging off-hand remarks by students and faculty about religious zealotry, so frequent that even students of faith tend to shrug them off.

All of this begs the question: what exactly is so horrifying to Princeton administrators about a believer in Christ promoting conservative ideals? Underpinning this hostility to Christian conservatives, I submit, are three things: reluctance to accept Christianity itself, reluctance to accept conservative ideas and – most critically – a deep aversion to combining religion and politics.

Set aside the first two. There's nothing wrong with a reluctance to accept ideas or beliefs. The last point, though, deserves more attention.

Like any religion, an essential tenet of Christianity concerns the proper way to live one's life and prioritize things in the world. Given this, it would make little sense for a Christian person to approach politics, in which a crucial task is assigning value to various propositions about the quality and sanctity of life, *without* consulting her religious principles. As evidence, take any faith less overwrought with political overtones than Christianity – Buddhism, let's say – and ask its followers about a pressing political issue. The specifics of the issue probably won't matter all that much: whether abortion or welfare reform, the approach to life garnered from Buddhists' religious convictions will invariably play a crucial role in their responses. Even an unwillingness to pass moral

judgment on others – the response that would engender the most praise from a typical Princeton student – would itself be influenced by religious dogma.

Analogously, atheists probably view hot-button issues like vouchers and school prayer, among many others, from an angle that can be traced in part to their rejection of God. And, counterintuitively, those declaring neutrality toward religion – secularists – have already taken an important stance through their desire not to take one.

To see why, think of a person during wartime claiming neutrality by neither taking up arms nor joining with pacifist protestors. As a theoretical matter, he's neutral; as a practical matter, of course, he's plainly not fighting. Inaction is often as ideological as action itself, just as refusal to take sides on religious issues is every bit as dogmatic – and consequential – as preferential treatment for or against it.

This is a long way of pointing out a reality that is obvious to all, but is acknowledged by few: when formulating policy, which inevitably requires moral assessments, one's attitude toward religion *is* germane. This isn't meant to suggest that religious grounding, or lack of it, is the only way to arrive at certain ethical precepts. Rather, it is to say that, secular or religious, atheistic or theistic, the influence of religion on politics is unavoidable. Faith matters.

Sadly, those who regularly ridicule any hint of a mix between religion and politics will probably concede much of the argument presented here, and proceed with business as usual. It should not be lost on these readers how dramatically acceptance of this argument would change the nature of political discourse on campus.

Significantly, it would be an admission that the administration is not, as a practical matter, neutral toward religious and nonreligious groups when it comes to divisive political issues. To favor those groups who (not so subtly) flaunt their dissociation from religion is to ignore that every approach – religious, nonreligious, anti-religious – has already made critical faith-related assumptions that bias them. This means that taking sides is inevitable, whether the administration likes to admit it or not.

The nature of campus discussions is also implicated by this argument. Take the November 19th *Prince* column by Robin Williams '04, a classic example of artificially divorcing religion from moral and political issues. In an effort to defend homosexuality and dismiss its religious critics, Williams invokes ACLU 1:1: "As for God and religious concerns, we all know about the separation of church and state." The good news for religious folks is that the "separation" applies to specific government policies; it was never meant to stamp out all moral thought that had religious foundations.



Princeton students gather for the first anniversary of September 11th

The Founders might also be surprised by Williams' argument, which overlooks those pesky words in the Declaration of Independence, "…that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights."

Or consider exchanges students have with religious conservatives. Typically, they end on a note closely resembling this: "You're just arguing that because you're Christian. Not everyone shares your sense of morality, so avoid basing your opinions on religious convictions."

Put aside the references to *"your* morality" and "*my* morality" that pervade much of the hostility to religion at Princeton, as it would be a great disservice to secularism to equate it with that brand of moral relativism. Focus instead on the obvious mockery and condescension emanating from the construction "just…because you're Christian." It's eerily similar to that other oft-heard disclaimer that students offer on behalf of conservative friends: "Oh, I know she's conservative, but that's only because she's Christian." (To which, presumably, the other discussant nods with lament for the brainwashed, backwards religious conservative.)

If those who instinctively lapse into this sort of rhetoric accept my argument, then they understand a few points. To begin with, the irony surrounding the "just…because you're Christian" claim is that it is not wholly false; as I've argued, religious perspectives *do* inform political views in a very substantive way. That being the case, however, it would be wrong to conclude from this that Christian doctrine necessitates a specific political alliance. If you don't trust me, ask Cornel West or Al Gore.

Princeton students' manner of attributing conservatism to Christianity, then, is a half-truth of the worst kind. Not only is the crux of the claim easily disproven by pointing to secular conservatives and Christian liberals, but its only smidgen of accuracy – that views on religion play a necessary role in *all* political orientations, conservatism being no exception – is saturated with condescension toward the "religious right."

It's not clear how to relieve the burgeoning tension between religious and nonreligious elements on campus. But, surely, these half-truths and unproductive labels are non-starters, as are administrative policies whose ideological thrust is not altogether different. With all due respect, Ms. Bazarsky, Dean Deignan and – yes – President Tilghman: please take notice.

PEACE IN OUR TIME?

The Rev. Dr. Thomas Breidenthal, Appeasement, and Iraq

John Andrews '05

"I have one correction to make to the service. In the hymn printed in your bulletin, we mistakenly printed the word 'Christ.' As this is an ecumenical service, if we could substitute that with 'God,' I think that would work."

When I heard this understandably awkward correction from our Dean of Religious Life Thomas Breidenthal, I realized that this is not your typical Sunday morning at the Princeton University Chapel.

Even more surprising were some of the Christian elements of the service. As a whole, the selection of hymns was especially New-Agey, even for the New Century Hymnal, commissioned in 1977 to provide a "more inclusive" worship experience and adopted by Princeton's service of Ecumenical Christian Worship. Selections for the service included a setting by an organist who "felt that the familiar words to Kremser contained too much militaristic imagery," and another that had been sung at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

My eyes opened wide, however, at the hymn "God the Omnipotent!" set to the Tsarist Russian national anthem. Its refrain: "Give to us peace in our time, we pray."

"Peace in our time." Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, who sought to prevent war with Germany and Italy through appeasement, popularized the phrase. In the name of peace, he recognized the Italian occupation of Ethiopia, maintained English neutrality in the Spanish Civil War, and sought to decommission naval bases in Ireland. In September 1938, Chamberlain and his French counterpart recognized the German claim to Czechoslovak Sudetenland. Brandishing the Munich Agreement, he returned home to a hero's welcome. Chamberlain himself, however, soon realized that "peace in our time" would not last and began full rearmament.



"Go home, and get a nice quiet sleep."
— Prime Minister Chamberlain (left), September 1938, to a crowd gathered outside 10 Downing Street

Our own Dean Breidenthal, however, harbors no reservations as to the efficacy of kowtowing to America's nemesis. At the Service for Peace, he was joined by the Rt. Rev. G.P. Bellshaw, Chairman of the Coalition for Peace Action, and also the Rev. Lyndon F. Harris, who sermonized that "our current policy goes beyond addressing the legitimate and terrifying problem of terrorism; it devolves into a vindictive and violent state." Lest anyone think that the hymn selection was mere coincidence, consider Breidenthal's sermon on November 17. [The reader is encouraged to examine these sermons, which can be found at *http://web.princeton.edu/sites/chapel/sermons.html*, in their egregious entireties.] "The whole of Christian tradition stands against the policy our nation is now pursuing," he said on the Bush administration's stance towards Iraq. Quite a resounding denunciation. Quite untrue.

In making the Christian case against military intervention, Breidenthal makes two grievous misrepresentations unbecoming a man of his integrity and reputation. First, in flat contradiction to Breidenthal's statement, Christian tradition does not unilaterally oppose war against Hussein's Saddam Hussein's regime. As the ever-civil Professor Robert George noted in a recent *Daily Princetonian*, "I think that it is good for policy makers to know that people of faith are divided, with the Vatican, for example, urging restraint, and the Southern Baptist convention calling for forceful action." Does Breidenthal exclude the Southern Bap-

tists, or the medieval Crusaders for that matter, from "the Christian tradition"?

Furthermore, what exactly is "the policy our nation now pursuing"? It is simply to speak the only language Saddam understands, indeed the means by which he obtained and maintains power: the threat of force. Heritage Foundation Research Fellow James Phillips argues that, "A hair trigger for military action is needed to defeat the obstructive tactics that Saddam used to undermine UNSCOM's effectiveness." The United States cannot allow Iraq to play the same games it played from 1991 to 1998: declaring sites off-limits, intimidating Iraqi scientists during their interviews with observers, even sneaking machinery out the back door of sites as inspectors come in the front.

Of course, inspections are a temporary measure aimed at eliminating the most immediate threat of WMD. As Phillips concludes, "The root of the problem is the nature of the regime, not the regime's weapons… Ultimately, the only way to be certain of ridding Iraq of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) is to rid it of Saddam Hussein's menacing regime." When discussing the appropriateness of military intervention in Iraq, it is important to distinguish between force used towards immediate enforcement of existing Security Council resolutions and force used towards "regime change" or other long-term, unilateral goals. Breidenthal has yet to make such a distinction.

The second misrepresentation Breidenthal makes lies in an extremely restrictive reading of "Just War" philosophy. In defense of a theory "just this side of pacifism," Breidenthal cites the traditional criteria of just war (i.e. just cause, right authority, probability of success, proportionality and noncombatant immunity, to cite a recent letter by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops). He claims, again from the pulpit, that "the present course our nation is following does not meet any of these litmus tests." Well, yes. The present course of our nation is not war with Iraq. Rather, we are engaging in a show of force calculated to force Iraq to abate its development of WMD. I would submit to Dean Breidenthal another "litmus test" of Just War, the criterion of War itself.

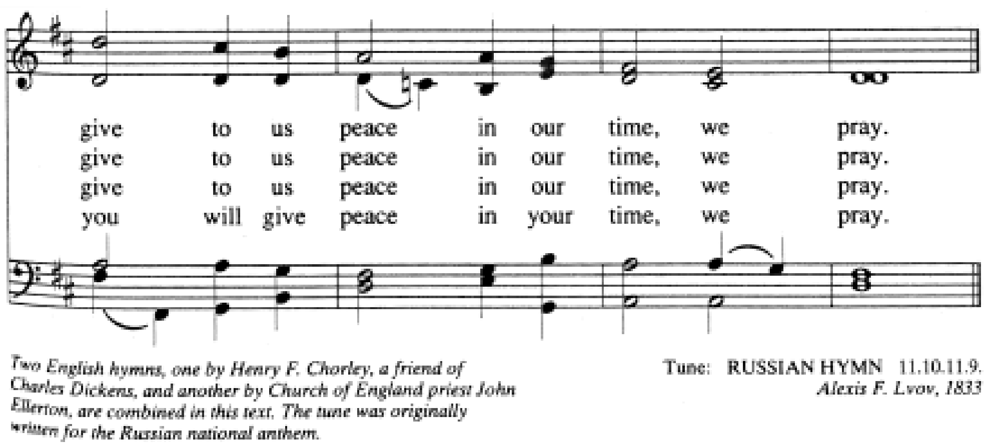
The observant reader may note a problem here. If we don't object to a potential war as unjust until war begins, then isn't it too late to object? One can indeed object to a potential war by claiming that current conditions likely to continue into wartime do not fulfill Breidenthal's litmus test. When war becomes justifiable, it may then erupt. Consider the use of force against Afghanistan, which the Conference of Catholic Bishops accepted as justifiable in a letter to President Bush. Before September 11, 2002, despite the Taliban's state-sponsored terror and abysmal human rights record, the United States could not act against the regime because it lacked casus belli. After September 11, the harboring of a handful of wanted men – a relatively minor offense – gave the U.S. "just cause" to invade, to topple the Taliban, and to establish a more democratic government.

Nothing fundamental changed on 9/11, when long-planned terrorist acts were finally executed. The only real change was the needless loss of American life. Al-Qaeda and the Taliban did not suddenly become evil; they had been evil for years. Had the U.S. struck before the terrorists, it would have been equally just in doing so, no matter whether the bishops approved.

When asked by *Newsweek* (Nov. 11) whether there are circumstances in which intervention in Iraq would be justified, incoming Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Rowan Williams responded, "If a clear act of aggression had taken place, which could be met by some sort of concerted, coalition-based response, including other Muslim states."

"If a clear act of aggression had taken place"? I find it disheartening that, in the name of Christianity, Breidenthal and fellow clergy require the death of innocents in order for "just cause" to be met. Isn't the preservation of innocent life and free society a just cause in itself? By waiting for an invasion of Poland or a Pearl Harbor, and making a policy out of doing so, don't we forfeit the advantage of surprise and offer the enemy one free hit? The longer that WMD programs – in all nations hostile to ours – continue unhindered, the stakes grow higher and higher, until the day when America's enemies will be able to take that one free hit and make it a death blow.

Like Archbishop Williams, Briedenthal's understanding of Just War excludes pre-emptive action as currently contemplated by the Bush administration. By presenting Just War as a series of absolute "litmus tests" and his reading of these tests as authoritative, he disregards the possibility of legitimate differing interpretations from other religious leaders. As Robert George tactfully says, "In considering a possible war against the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq,



Perhaps taking a cue from F. Scott Fitzgerald, Breidenthal dubs his brand of Just War Theory "this side of pacifism."

some contemporary just war theorists have suggested that the pre-emptive use of force is by definition aggressive rather than defensive. In my view, this is incorrect. A pre-emptive military strike qualifies as defensive when it is motivated by a reasonable belief that the use of force is necessary to prevent unjust aggression that is being planned or for which preparation is being made." Let there be no doubt that such preparations are being made in the hidden places of Iraq.

Dean Breidenthal is an excellent minister. However, he is less proficient as a political scientist, and he should stick to his considerable expertise instead of dragging his office into political muck. We don't want George W. Bush preaching the Gospel from the bully pulpit; do we need Breidenthal to issue polemics from his?

Furthermore, I strongly object to the timing of this Service for Peace. Not only does it replace the ecumenical Christian Sunday service, but the Interfaith Service for Peace aired anti-war propaganda the day before Veteran's Day. When contacted regarding the service's timing, Breidenthal responded:

"I believe the Interfaith Service for Peace has always fallen on the second Sunday of November. I am not aware of any intended connection with Veterans' Day (although such a connection would not, in my view, be inappropriate, since Veterans' Day started out as Armistice Day, and I have never met a veteran who was not praying for peace)."

Do the math. The second Sunday occurs between November 8 and 14 and is thus centered on Veterans' Day. Regarding the prayers of veterans, one would think that veterans would favor lasting peace over "peace in our time," considering that they fought – and some in wars not considered "just" by pontiffs. Were the Service for Peace exactly that, and not a thinly veiled political rally, I would have no objection to it.

So near to Veterans' Day, the Service's message, that American military action is a futile and almost always evil tool of misguided foreign policy, is a slap in the face to those who have dedicated their careers and their lives to the noble service of our great nation. (Of course, we knew already that Princeton does not take great pains to honor her veterans. Even Harvard University, where the Law School opened only this summer to military recruiters, observes Veteran's Day by not holding classes. Princeton makes no such acknowledgement.)

It is disheartening that, in the name of Christianity, Breidenthal and fellow clergy require the death of innocents in order for "just cause" to be met.

Another disturbing aspect of Dean Breidenthal's political preaching is his tendency to exaggerate the risks he takes in issuing these diatribes. Last Sunday, he addressed the reluctance of religious leaders to speak out against military action against Iraq, attributing this reluctance to the hostility of the general public towards pacifism. (Here's a thought: Maybe the preachers don't like despots either.) As someone who faced the same hostility, he suggested that he also was also taking a risk. Who is he kidding? As much as he may wish to be a martyr to conscience, as a leftist academic in leftist academia, he's going to get a pat on the head from President Tilghman – if anyone notices. Anyone, that is, except for a few students who noticed – and who were moved to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "God Bless America" on the Chapel steps after this Service for Peace.

The Twenty-Third Annual Interfaith Service for Peace was reminiscent of Senator Wellstone's memorial service: a leftist rally dressed up as a spiritual occasion.

Peace is a noble goal. I admire the courage of clergymen like Dean Breidenthal, priests who stand fast on principle in the name of faith. However, as Chamberlain discovered, we cannot place faith in the promises of tyrants. To turn the other cheek is indeed the Christian response to aggression in one's personal life. President Bush, however, is responsible for 281 million lives. Faced with an enemy as implacable as Hitler, an enemy which will not rest until the annihilation of America and her allies, turning the other cheek can only lead to the perdition of free society. Our response to tyranny must not be Chamberlain's, but Churchill's.

"Peace in our time" does not ensure peace for our children; the Munich Pact lasted one uneasy year. The surest way to guarantee immediate security is to prevent the proliferation of WMD. To quote a hymn from the Service for Peace, "All that kills abundant living, let it from the earth be banned." The surest way to achieve lasting peace is by taking power from military dictatorships, by peaceful reforms if possible, and empowering representative democracies in their stead. Contrary to Breidenthal's ecclesiastical bull, we can render unto God what is God's while rendering unto Saddam what he has coming to him.

Though we trust in "God the Omnipotent," we cannot allow our country to become impotent. If we earnestly pray for peace on Earth, we must use all the means at our disposal to bring peace. We must be prepared to work for peace for all time, not just in our time. In the words of Sir Thomas More, "The things, good Lord, that we pray for, give us the grace to labor for." Or, as a more modern prayer concluded, "Let's roll."

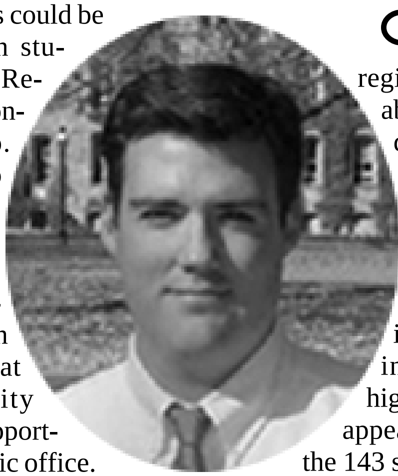
PRINCETONIANS AT THE POLLS

Confused, Abused, or Just Don't Care?

Evan Baehr '05

Considering that "Fall Break" was once a period for political activism but has now become a week-long Bacchanalian vacation, Whig-Clio was once a vibrant political society but has now become a home base for debate teams that compete off-campus, and once-thriving student political groups can hardly find members, one might begin to question how much Princeton really embraces democracy. While these realities might represent gradual changes in our student body, Princeton's voter registration and voter participation in the November 5 election convincingly argues that we have finally relinquished our formerly loose grasp on democratic principles.

In a meeting with the Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Students Thomas Dunne, the vice-president of College Republicans was told that absolutely no voter registration drives could be conducted by partisan student groups, College Republicans obviously considered such a group. Dunne said that due to the University's tax-free status, a recent conference with legal counsel in Washington, D.C. resulted in the imposition of new regulations that protect the University from accusations of supporting a candidate for public office. These allegations, if true, could result in the loss of tax-free status.



After going to dinner in Mathey College, however, it was clear that the new policy only applied to College Republicans—the College Democrats had set up tables complete with signs for voter registration. To confirm their initiative, they received front-page *Prince* coverage for their laudable efforts. A communication error or a dean abusing his power by favoring liberals? Whether intentional or accidental, it nevertheless resulted in neutering the CR's pre-election "get-out-the-vote" (GOTV) efforts.

When I described this scenario to a friend, she asked, "How do partisan groups conduct voter registration at all?" She said, what happens when a Republican goes up to the College Democrat table? Do they offer her a form? How would they know if she's Republican? To be honest, they would probably never know and register her anyway. Considering that New Jersey doesn't even offer partisan registration—you declare your party with separate paperwork sent to a different location—registration is really only about participating in the democratic process of choosing representatives, not about creating party opposition.

Too bad, College Republicans, no new voters for you.

Practically, the two-part NJ voter registration process results in an overwhelmingly high percentage of voters appearing unaffiliated. Of the 143 students registered with an address in Forbes Annex, one is Democratic and one independent; the remainder are "unaffiliated." In Princeton Township District 12, 1.4 percent are Republican and 6.9 percent are Democratic. While many perceive Princeton students to be politically apathetic, numbers this low probably reflect Mercer County record error.

Upon closer examination of the registration records, Princeton's housing policy begins to appear suspect; for example, *twelve* female students are registered to 126 1940 Hall. While Butler's appearance and amenities have not won it a spot on Orange Key tours, cramming *twelve* females in one room is not among residents' complaints. Upon a visit to room 126 today looking for the twelve female residents, any of the eight *male* residents would be quick to set you straight.

This is not the exception—a cursory examination reveals that around 80 percent of the addresses are wrong or are for students no longer living anywhere in Princeton. In order to "verify" addresses and that these voters even exist, Mercer County sends out sample ballots. Anyone whose ballot is returned to the county as a result of "incorrect address" is un-registered; everyone else, they assume, must still live at their address on record.

Mercer County does not understand, however, that Princeton University is simply incompetent with mail. Whether it's a credit card bill received *after* the due date or my plane tickets arriving two days after my flight, residential colleges and the Frist mailroom provide a significant disservice with an inefficient system that is almost prohibitive – I don't give out my address because anything sent will be lost or delivered too late. The implication for voter registration is that no one is ever removed from the registration list, distorting statistics on voter turnout, student registration, and party affiliation.

While the incomplete records provide little *accurate* insight into student voter participation, a day at the polls as a Princeton Borough Board of Registry

officer might. How was turnout? Horrendous. At Trinity Church, the polling site for *most* Princeton students, we had 227 voters, consisting mostly of long-time residents who vote more as ritual than for actually choosing candidates. The students that did show up included mostly "awareness-raising liberals" (the Democrat to Republican voting ratio in District 1 was over 3:1), first-time voters who donned ear-to-ear grins as they approached the ancient voting booths, and even a student who wanted to celebrate Election Day by drinking, a lot, and then cursing at us when we told him he was at the wrong polling site.

Such a low turnout reflects the failed effort of campus groups to get out the vote. Perhaps if the College Republicans had been allowed to conduct voter registration, the number might not have been so discouraging.

Unfortunately, there were more hurdles than just registering to vote, including *finding* the polls. The misinformed USG sent out an email instructing everyone to go to Trinity Church. However, Borough redistricting actually placed students into *three* districts, two in the Township and one in the Borough. To complicate things further, a voter's polling site is not based on current address, but rather that held when the voter registered.

Close to half of the students who showed up at Trinity were "problem" voters: they were at the wrong site, they had moved and not reregistered (in fact, *everyone* had moved since last year), they weren't registered at all, or they had requested an absentee ballot. Close to three-quarters of students were not correctly registered, meaning that many had to use a provisional ballot (a lengthy form that qualifies voters) and some couldn't vote at all.

Rachael Rawson '05, a Republican challenger from District 12, points out that "the system is terrible: it prevents most students from voting like everyone else does. They are so excited to be voting, many for the first time, and then they can't." One female student at Trinity Church was very disappointed that she had to use a provisional ballot; she told us she only came because she wanted to use the "cool voting booth."

Setting aside questionable student motives for voting, the method of voter registration is without a doubt disenfranchising students. The Borough and County, after all, have no desire to register students. They send a clear message to Princeton students – that they have no problem with students not being able to vote. With the help of Dean Dunne's restricting on-campus registration, Princeton students are being discouraged from participating in democracy.

The Borough and County send a clear message to Princeton students: they have no problem with students not being able to vote.

The University should be proactive in encouraging registration; after all, we are a significant percentage of the Borough and could have significant voting power—November 2002 numbers show that Princeton students could be 40 percent of registered voters in Princeton Borough. Especially if we ever field a serious student candidate for Borough Council, which will likely happen next year, student participation is essential for extending University influence into the Borough.

The College Republicans, College Democrats, and the USG should diligently coordinate voter registration and a GOTV drive. (Hopefully, conservatives won't be censored again.) If successful, students' interests and concerns could be represented as soon as next fall, when two seats are up for election on the Council.

More importantly, on an ideological level, we will no longer espouse democratic principles in our courses, history, and traditions, and yet hypocritically discourage democratic participation on Election Day.

Can Liberals Trust Americans?

Election Day reveals a trend within the Democratic Party

Daniel Mark ’03

I finally understand the difference between liberals and conservatives. In his lecture at Princeton last month, Judge Robert Bork correctly pointed out that the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment does not ban prayer in public schools. After the talk, I asked him what safeguards our Constitution provides against school prayer in the name of a particular God of a particular religion. As I had anticipated, he replied that there was none, but that we alternatively rely on “the good sense of the American people.”

As a conservative Jew, the issue of prayer in public schools is a potentially troubling one since the majority of this country is Christian, and, therefore, prayer in public schools is likely to be Christian prayer. However, like Judge Bork, I am willing to rely on the good sense of the American people. That is not so say that there has never been Christian prayer in public schools or that American communities have always been accommodating toward religious minorities. On the whole, though, the trend has been toward religious inclusion and pluralism, making it ever easier for families to select neighborhoods that meet their theological needs. Indeed, the recent controversial Supreme Court cases have not been over the Lord’s Prayer but over moments of silence and nondenominational invocations.

Unable to account for the success of a nation of dolts, the left resents America, a nation blessed with bounty it does not deserve.

Shortly after the Bork speech, I had the chance to share Judge Bork’s comment to me with a liberal Jewish friend of mine. She quickly observed that the difference between her and Judge Bork (and, by extension, between her and me) was that she had no faith in the good sense of the American people. For me, her statement epitomized not the difference between Jews and Christians or between theists and atheists but between liberals and conservatives.



Alexis de Tocqueville

After all, what motivates the left’s cries for massive income redistribution, including socialized medicine, ever-expanding welfare, gluttonous public schools, and unsustainable Social Security? At the heart of contemporary liberalism lies a fundamental mistrust of the ability of Americans to make the right decisions for themselves. That is why the Democratic agenda is often characterized by such anti-capitalist, even anti-democratic rhetoric. Ultimately, they are unwilling to rely on the good sense of the American people to decide how to spend their money or how to educate their children.

Consider the following excerpt from a letter by Ira Hozinsky to liberal pundit Eric Alterman (quoted on Opinionjournal.com) regarding the results of this past Election Day:

“The reason for the Republican triumph is simple: the American people are stupid. The ineptitude and corruption of the Bush Administration are radiantly obvious to anyone with half a brain, and it should not have been necessary for the Democrats to make any case at all. It should be abundantly clear to anyone with principles and intelligence that trying to bring about meaningful change through electoral politics is a waste of time. The American people don’t want it.”

In his e-mail, Hozinsky neatly sums up the philosophy of the left: “the American people are stupid.” Admittedly, most liberals are savvy enough to avoid language such as this. However, the underlying theme is the same. Americans are not to be trusted with their own money let alone with their own vote. This is precisely the attitude that propels the stereotype of “middle America” as a swath of ignorant, unsophisticated hicks, languishing between the more cosmopolitan coastal regions.

What the left fails to see is that our country was founded on the good sense of the American people. The Founders, along with their keen visitor Alexis de Tocqueville, recognized that political institutions could only go so far in preserving the nation. With enough abuse, any system could be toppled. Instead, our nation has flourished because thoughtful, enterprising Americans have made more good choices than bad ones. Failing to acknowledge this, the left stumbles to its advocacy of socialism rooted in its profound mistrust of average Americans. Unable to account for the success of a nation of dolts, the left resents America, a nation blessed with bounty it does not deserve.

In the end, this grave misunderstanding of our country may have cost the Democrats the last election. Only for so long will people tolerate being told that they must empower elites to run their lives for them. The Democrats may continue to betray the principles of capitalism and democracy but only to see their own demise, for it is those founding ideologies—in the hands of ordinary citizens—that brought this country to such greatness.

TARGETED KILLING

A Question of Wartime Morality

Brad Heller '05

One commonly-heard liberal criticism of conservative foreign policy today is that preoccupation with a possible war in Iraq is overshadowing the more important issue of the struggle against terrorism. Iraq has been featured prominently in the news lately, but one recent event in Yemen suggests that fighting al-Qaeda is far from forgotten; rather, it seems to have reached a new intensity.



Dude, Where's My Car?

A Yemeni examines the remains of the vehicle destroyed by a CIA unmanned aircraft.

On November 4th, the Central Intelligence Agency killed Qaed al-Harethi, a high-ranking al-Qaeda operative in Yemen, as well as five of his aides without interrogation, a trial, or even a judge. Dispatching a sophisticated unmanned aircraft to launch a missile against a car full of American enemies in a sovereign country sends out a variety of messages. In short, it symbolizes a departure from traditional methods of aggression while redefining the dimensions of the battlefield. The CIA claims that it was working in concert with the Yemeni government to capture these men, but such an excuse serves only to allay a concern for American nationalism in the region while ignoring the real issue at hand.

The pursuit of justice in the name of unbiased and fair council is an important part of Americanism, and it was just this tenet that was so flagrantly violated because the right thing to do wasn't, as is often the case, the easy thing to do. Even the highest-ranking al-Qaeda officials, including Osama bin Laden himself, require the protection of American law. Such is the beauty of our judicial system, an important precept of our political heritage for which the courageous veterans of this great country have fought throughout our history.

This hypocritical action on the part of the CIA serves not only to undermine the legitimacy of the American cause all over the world, but also to alienate the hundreds of thousands of soldiers who might soon end up fighting in Iraq. The United States cannot maintain a reputation for protecting freedom around the world if we consistently veer from our stated practices of war.

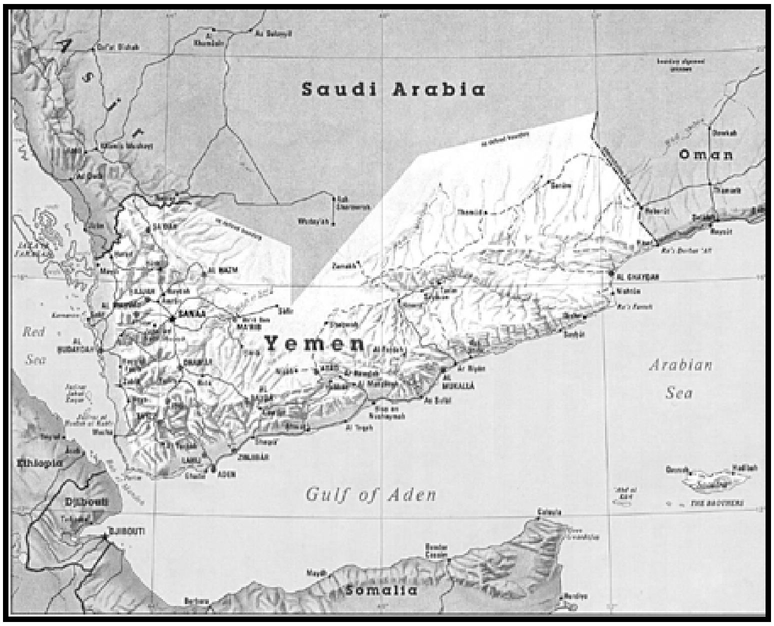
When America breaks its own laws, the battle is lost, not won.

Ironically, assassination is legal in Israel. Of course, Israel is in a far more precarious state of national security than the United States is, and perhaps this helps to rationalize the legalization of such a morally dubious practice. Nevertheless, America surely doesn't want to be seen as responding to security threats as violently as Israel, due to the effect such actions would have on America's international image. Additionally, how can one during the course of a war hope to find a lasting peace if during conflict one side assassinates the leaders of the enemy? Such actions create distrust and delay the end to a just war.

In all fairness to the think tanks that justified this offense in Yemen, it is reasonable to believe that fighting an entity without borders like al-Qaeda requires battles be fought with the same degree of freedom on our side. In support of such a notion, one senior Pentagon official said to the *New York Times* that "we're at war with al-Qaeda [and] if we find an enemy combatant, then we should be able to use military forces to take military action…" Without question, fighting an enemy like al-Qaeda – who refuses to play by the rules – is difficult if a defender like the United States must adhere to a certain code. But the reason we fight terrorism is in defense of this code, and to break it in order to suit our needs indicates that perhaps the war against terror is being lost after all.

Anthony Lang, Ph.D. of the Carnegie Council, a nonpartisan organization concerned with the ethics of foreign affairs, has analyzed the moral ramifications of assassinations. He suggests that even though the killing

of innocents is by itself immoral, historical circumstances suggest that assassination used to be a more accepted form of aggression. He believes that this practice first lost its appeal in Europe when leaders sought to oppose it as a means of self-preservation.



Yemen: A question of national sovereignty, government morality, or military expedience?

Nevertheless, Lang reasons that it would be better to accomplish assassination in the overt manner that al-Harethi and his cronies were killed rather than a sustained, blanketed bombing efforts such as the ones the U.S. has already attempted unsuccessfully against Muammar Qaddafi and Saddam Hussein.

Granted, if an assassination is warranted, the best strategy would aim to minimize risk to civilians. It is important to note here that assassination is traditionally defined as the targeted killing of a head of state. Thus, al-Harethi was not actually assassinated because he was not the leader of al-Qaeda. Besides, it turns out that the policy restricting American-supported assassinations is not law, but rather an executive order. Thus, the President can easily find a loophole to eliminate the leaders of American adversaries.

Perhaps a valid question to ask, then, is why the Central Intelligence Agency would choose to perform a targeted killing of al-Harethi instead of bringing him to justice. Of course, it is possible that some degree of information might have been extracted from al-Harethi, and this is one obvious drawback of killing him outright. But I believe that this attack was motivated by the popular American hesitation to risk a single American casualty in armed conflict. Needless to say, casualties of any sort are a most unfortunate result of battle. But if Americans died trying to arrest al-Harethi, they would have done so in order to uphold the very principle of American justice that was violated. Such a death is honorable and gives legitimacy to our cause in that we are willing to risk our lives to maintain our way of life. Thus, the fear of losing life in the war against terror, although understandable, undermines the effort because it encourages actions like the targeting killing of al-Harethi that are wrong *and* counterproductive.

Even though the United States has empirically violated its assassination policy, further deviations of this nature are unfavorable and must not be allowed to continue. The Bush administration has taken a venerable position to lead both a war against al-Qaeda and an international coalition to disarm Iraq, but it must remain true to its principles. As Americans, our duty is to uphold the proud history of our country and that means fighting wars ethically. This means, in part, prohibiting assassinations and targeted killings of foreign functionaries. The citizens of the United States and the members of our armed forces deserve no less.

Off on the Wrong Foot

Slanted Feminism at Freshman Orientation

Duncan Sahner '06

Winner of the Freshman Writing Contest

Around the middle of this past summer, every '06er received an orange booklet in preparation for our freshman assembly, "Gender Politics in the Mid-Twentieth Century." The booklet contained some of Sylvia Plath's poems as well as an excerpt from *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan; an attached note explained that we had to read these texts before the lecture. I don't exactly remember my initial reaction—it was probably something between a laugh and a groan. "Gender Politics in the Mid-Twentieth Century" struck me as an odd choice: if the purpose of the freshman assembly was to bring my class together in the spirit of learning and debate, might there be something better to discuss, such as the importance of studying history or the impact of technology on religion? More plainly, something that didn't point to a liberal agenda? The assembly's particular agenda was not outright liberal manipulation. The University was not trying to indoctrinate or brainwash freshmen—people who believe that write off freshmen's capacity for independent thinking. "Gender Politics in the Mid-Twentieth Century" was simply too narrow a topic in the first place and the talk was one-sided even within that scope.

If the purpose of the freshman assembly was to bring my class together in the spirit of learning and debate, might there be something better to discuss?

The lecturer, Deborah Nord, Director of the Program in the Study of Women and Gender, opened by discussing mid-century representations of women, using Marilyn Monroe, Rosie the Riveter and two contrasting pictures of Sylvia Plath; these images were supposed to show society's objectification and glorification of women. The lecture moved on to discuss the context in which Betty Friedan wrote *The Feminine Mystique*. Finally, and for the greatest part of the lecture, Prof. Nord returned to Plath, a writer whose anger and sometimes gruesome poems—see "Lady Lazarus," which alludes to Nazi death camps—are rooted in her poor treatment at the hands of men. The assembly became more of an exercise in poetry analysis than a stimulating talk on something currently relevant to us and to our intellectual lives at Princeton.



Sylvia Plath: Required Reading for '06's Freshman Assembly

Many freshmen anticipated a slanted approach, but kept an open mind at the behest of those who said, "You never know, the lecture could take an entirely different turn that what you expect." Sadly, though, it didn't. The assembly was so specific that it seemed difficult to object on ideological grounds: what Prof. Nord said about Sylvia Plath probably *was* right. She was depressed and tied down in a horrible marriage, and her poems were an understandable reaction to abuse. The central problem lay in our inability to disagree. What Prof. Nord said wasn't thought provoking—a quick glance at the bored expressions on most people's faces was sufficient proof.

Feeling that the lecture had been one-sided, I decided to voice my opinion; when Prof. Nord asked if there were any questions, I raised my hand and asked her about Phyllis Schlafly, the conservative thinker who played a central role in the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment. It was immediately clear that few people recognized her name. I don't blame my classmates for this—if history classes gloss over Schlafly, how are they supposed to appreciate her and her work? More worrisome, however, was that when Prof. Nord realized people's unfamiliarity with Schlafly, her explanation became more of a summary dismissal. She said that Schlafly was ironic because she profited from a life outside of the home while vehemently urging traditional roles for women. On that note, Prof. Nord ended her talk.

Freshmen were immediately ushered into group conversations moderated by professors in the residential colleges. How did we feel walking away from this skewed assembly? Hardly anyone said that it held his or her interest. Unsurprisingly, men were more vocal about their disapproval. Though my all-

male RA group included guys who agreed both entirely and partially with me, no one aligned himself with radical feminism. While speaking to other freshmen, I heard repeatedly that many girls disagreed with the assembly and with the radical feminism linked to "Gender Politics in the Mid-Twentieth Century," but hesitated to say so in their small groups for fear of being labeled regressive or a slave to male hegemony.

Such reluctance to express a reasonable opinion—regardless of whether there's a good reason to stay quiet—undermines the freedom of that favorite Princeton word: *discourse*. What kind of exercise was this for the Class of 2006? When asked for remarks about her lecture, Prof. Nord answered, "I have had numerous comments from the RAs, lecturers, and junior faculty members who led the small-group discussions after my talk, and each one has reported that conversation was lively and debate passionate." Prof. Nord made no response to questions of how she would improve the talk or to criticisms of its narrow scope, offering only, "One year students will hear about gender politics and Sylvia Plath, the next about research on the Genome Project, the next about the Holocaust, the next about the Civil War. This tradition, then, draws on the true richness and diversity of our faculty, its knowledge, and its opinions." Several explanations for Prof. Nord's observations emerge: either small-group moderators did not notice student discontent with the talk, or chose not to inform Prof. Nord of that discontent, or Prof. Nord simply did not wish to discuss those concerns.



Phyllis Schlafly

After the assembly, freshmen were supposed to share ideas unreservedly, without censorship or censure. Instead, a talk coming out of Left field—yes, *that* Left—with which we couldn't really disagree "welcomed" us.

The lecture offered little or no fertile ground for debate. Where was the dissenting opinion? Did the freshmen (who had arrived on campus just two days before the assembly) really feel at ease to discuss the sensitive nuances of feminism, especially after Prof. Nord wrote off Phyllis Schlafly and her ilk? Prof. Nord obviously put a lot of effort into this talk, but it's painfully clear that she should have followed a broader program.

Real intellectual discourse—not a PC imitation of it—requires an inclusive approach free from any ideological agenda, even if that agenda was unintentional. Moreover, no one should have to fear the Thought Police, most especially at a place like Princeton. Let's hope that future freshman assemblies better ignite the "true richness and diversity of our *students*, *their* knowledge, and *their* opinions,"—not just the faculty's.



The *Tory* Staff. . . a model of diversity.

Things For Which I Am Thankful On This Thanksgiving

10) I am thankful that I do not live in a country where "elections" feature a "choice" of one candidate…like Saddam's "we're about to get our butts handed to us" Iraq.

9) I am thankful that I do not live in a country where political dissent is crushed with torture and brutal repression…like Communist North Korea.

8) I am thankful that I do not live in a country that treats women like prisoners and denies them any opportunity for self-determination…like our Saudi Arabian "allies."

7) I am thankful that I do not live in a country where clergy of minority religions are jailed, or executed, simply for teaching their beliefs…like the third "axis," Iran.

6) I am thankful that I do not live in a country where the government decides how many children I may have, or else face forced abortion…like modern-day China.

5) I am thankful that I do not live in a country where newspapers print with constant fear of government censorship and violent reprisals…like "reform-minded" Russia.

4) I am thankful that I do not live in a country where "retreat" is a way of life and submission is the primary means of defense…like weak-sauce France.

3) I am thankful that I do not live in a country where everyone must wait months for medical procedures because of nationalized healthcare…like the Canucks above us.

2) I am thankful that I do not live in a country where suicide attacks are cheered and a lost cause is the only cause…like, it's not a country, but oh well, Palestine.

1) I am thankful that I live in the freest, strongest, most prosperous country in the history of the world…that being, now and forever, The United States of America.

Amen. Pass the Turkey.

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